

# Iron County Register

BY ELI D. AKE.  
BENTON, MISSOURI

## POSTAL MYSTERIES.

Curious Cases Unearthed by an Inspector for the Department

Comfortably seated in his private office, Chief Post Office Inspector Edgerton told an inquirer reporter some of his many strange experiences during nineteen years of service in charge of various postal districts. "Do you know," said he, "there seems to be an epidemic of obscene letter writing from five to six complaints being made daily? This is unusual, and does not speak highly for the morals of the great number of people engaged in these unlawful practices. The suicide of the beautiful girl, Jessie White, of Joliet, Ill., recalls a similar case I had when in Cincinnati."

A wealthy, respectable and very good-looking woman, the wife of a prominent man in politics and business, was for a long time the recipient of scurrilous postal cards. From motives of delicacy she did not put the matter into the hands of the postal authorities until she was driven nearly crazy by them.

"She came to me bringing a large bundle of cards and hysterically told me how she had received two or three daily. She did not suspect any one, and I was obliged to go to work without a clue. Watch was kept upon the street boxes, but, as the cards were dropped everywhere, this method proved unsuccessful. Her husband paid many visits to the office and begged me for God's sake to try and discover who was doing it. I do not remember exactly how, but suspicion finally fastened upon the husband himself and I went to work on that basis. After careful investigation I discovered that my suspicions were correct. The wretch had been writing them himself. He had become infatuated with some woman and desired to get rid of his wife. Knowing her sensitive nature he thought by this method to drive her either insane or to suicide. For some time I said nothing, but worked on, listening to the husband's hypocritical complaints. When I had every thing ready I sent for this model husband and told him plainly what I had discovered. He was enraged, but when I related the story of his misdoings he became frightened and promised to do whatever I told him. For his wife's sake I did not arrest him, but, keeping the postals, I told him to go, and to remember that a repetition of the offense would lead to his punishment. When the wife called I told her that she would receive no more scurrilous missives. There are plenty of such cases, but many women will never complain."

"I had the pleasure of settling another case in St. Louis, but in this instance the shoe was on the other foot. A noted criminal lawyer came to me and told me that he had reason to believe that his wife was carrying on an illicit correspondence, through the medium of a private box in the post-office, with a notorious rough in that city. I, of course, investigated, and found that his suspicions were correct. They both had lock boxes, and when he came to get his business mail he would also remove this woman's letters from the other box. I sent a note to her advising her to call at my office. She came, not without trepidation, fondly imagining that none knew of her guilt. In a haughty manner she asked me to tell her, without any attempt to veneer it with soft words. She declared herself indignant and said she would tell her husband. I told her to be seated, that her husband had instituted the inquiry, and then advised her to drop the correspondence, as she was standing on the brink of disgrace and ruin, and all for the sake of a man noted for his dissolute manner of living. She became frightened and promised to stop, and as an assurance of her good faith gave me the key to her box. I sent for her husband and told him that he was mistaken, that his wife was not corresponding with any one except by the regular course of the mails. This, of course, was a lie by implication, but it sent him away a happy man, and I believe in such an instance the lie was justified."

"Speaking of St. Louis reminds me of another curious case. We had a man there, the chief registering clerk, who was indefatigable in his efforts to assist in detecting postal thieves. At that time the Kentucky lottery was in full blast, and whole batches of Louisville mail was disappearing, most of them with remittances to the lottery. This clerk was deep in our confidence that we told him to keep a sharp lookout for the thief. In a few days he said that they must be taken by the drivers of the mail wagons who came into the cars to get warm. I then made a personal investigation, but could find no drivers. Suspicion then turned upon the clerk, and sure enough I found he had been the thief. He was arrested and served the law. Oh, there are lots of funny things happening in the postal service which cause one to wonder if the good really exists in man."—Philadelphia Inquirer.

**Progress in Surgery.**  
Some remarkable achievements in surgery are reported from Berlin. At the surgical congress, Prof. Gluck demonstrated the successful substitution of catgut, ivory and bone freed from chaff, for defects in bones, muscles and nervous sinews. The juices of the body are sucked up in the inserted material, thereby establishing the junction of the separated ends, without any shortening of the part. He presented the cases of patients in whom there had been an insertion of from six to ten centimeters of catgut to supply defects in the leaders of the hands, to which complete mobility had been restored. In the case of another patient Prof. Gluck removed a tumor from the thigh, causing a considerable defect in the bone. He inserted ivory, and no shortening ensued. In another case he removed a large piece of nerve in the arm and inserted catgut, and the functions remained completely satisfactory.—Chicago Herald.

"During clear days people of Carthage, Ill., have distinctly heard the ringing of a ponderous church bell at Golden, twenty-eight miles away. The bell hangs in the German Lutheran Church tower at Golden, and it requires two men to ring it."

"A natural curiosity in the shape of a hip bone of a mastodon, weighing perhaps fifty pounds, was found at Alachua, Fla., a few days ago."

# Mandarin's Daughter.

BY WONG CHIN FO.

CHAPTER VI.—CONTINUED.

"You are looking beyond the earth. There is death behind you," came the voice from the yellow robe. "Drink!" and the dreadful cup came just a trifle nearer.

Death! and there was so much to live for—Li Kih; the competition, her parents. If she died there, no one would ever know her fate. The compressed lips parted just a trifle and the small, white head leaned forward with an almost imperceptible movement. The upmost corner, she hesitated to think. "Death!" said a voice behind her. "Drink!" came from the robe.

The words were all that broke the tomb-like stillness of the chamber save the breathing of the girl. She would drink, then, perhaps the awful ceremony would be ended.

The full, round lips kissed the cold edge of the cup. The hand which held it lifted it just a little, and the blood of the life and the lips of the living met. The liquid stained the crimson lips with a shameless red, the stain crept into the white teeth and trickled down her throat. She shuddered and felt as if the blood of the dead had pulsed her limbs. She choked, gasped and struggled for air.

Suddenly the cup was removed, a murmur went through the throng, lights blazed up, the hoods of the assemblage were thrown back and the faces of the band were revealed.

The figure in the robe of yellow advanced, and, extending his hand, lifted Sho Mai to her feet. She still held the sword which had been given her.

"Brother," said the man, "there is but one thing more for you to do. Many have lacked the necessary courage to face this last ordeal, and so have lost their lives. When I have finished no word of encouragement will be given you. You must do as you are instructed, or—"

"Death by the sword of the pirate clan," chanted the assemblage.

"Now act, and may you prove worthy to the name and sword of a Yotshai." Then addressing two men who stood on the opposite side of the chamber: "You know your duty."

At this the two pulled back the folds of a double curtain, which concealed a place in the wall which had been hidden even more brightly than the chamber itself. Against the rear wall of the alcove stood a man perfectly erect. A thin band of steel held his head in position, and bands of like metal encircled his neck, waist, ankles and wrists. His hands were stretched well out and his feet were well apart. Such a look of agony upon a human face the girl had never dreamed of. The eye-balls

rolled round and round in their sockets as if they had never known rest or quiet; the lips twitched and trembled, and a spot of blood on the white lip marked the place where a tooth had penetrated the flesh, while the hands alternately clenched themselves and unfolded.

"There is a traitorous heart, if ever one beat in the bosom of a man. He is not fit to live. My brother, do you find out his vital spot with that true and Thotshai blade and show how a Yotshai treats the enemies of Kwan Dah."

The mixture of the wine and blood the girl had drunk seemed to have filled her with fire, and her blood went coursing so quickly through the veins that when the speaker had finished she could almost hear it surging to and fro. Her cheeks were aflame, and her heart beat with a fierce, wild joy. She knew what was required of her. She must take a human life, but such was the wild excitement which now controlled her that she had less horror in contemplating this act than she had before in drinking the blood and wine.

She stepped forward with the weapon pointed toward the trembling wretch. It was within an inch of his breast. The blood surging to her brain dazed her. She wavered backward and forward, and as the condemned traitor saw her thus, as if summoning energy for a fatal stroke, he sent forth a cry of agony as he was hurled through the whole city. To Sho Mai it sounded like the voice of a thousand demons hailing the new murderer in the list of blood-stained souls. She staggered, and the blade in her hand, without her volition, touched the bare breast of the traitor. The steel was keen as a razor, and though the touch was light blood flowed in a bright red stream. Sho Mai saw it, and a voice seemed to thunder "Murderess!" in her ears. Her brain reeled, and, by the mercy of the gods, she fell to the floor unconscious!

How long she had lain thus she did not know, but when night came to her eyes she found herself alone, lying upon the tiles just as she had fallen. A shudder she turned her head toward the spot where a corpse should have hung suspended by the hands of steel, but the curtains had been drawn, and no sound came from behind them. She would have given much to lift that drapery and learn whether she had really taken a life, but her resolution failed her, and she turned toward the second apartment.

With feeble steps she staggered toward the curtain, but as she placed her hand upon it some force which she could not trace drew it back suddenly, and she entered, wondering.

There she saw seated about the apartment the members of the clan who had assisted at her initiation. She was immediately conducted to a seat before a raised dais, upon which was the man who wore the royal yellow robe and who acted as orator. An attendant brought her a glass of sweet wine, and when she had drunk she felt refreshed.

"It is considered by our brethren of the Yotshai that you have earned your robe," said the orator. "Remembering,

as we do, that you are but a boy, and that you have succeeded where more than one man has failed, we are inclined to look leniently upon your weakness and invest you with the black robe of a Yotshai." Then without further formality her robe of office was conferred upon her.

"Hear the word of the mighty Kwan Dah," said the orator, and at the name all heads were bowed. "The most high ruler grants the new Yotshai his choice, either to remain and serve the great Kwan Dah in his city or to sail under the flag of the white crescent in the ship of the First Chief, which shall presently sail."

A great hope swept through Sho Mai. Once free of this island could she not escape altogether from the sway of Kwan Dah? The thought well-nigh bereft her of speech, but gathering her courage she said at length:

"Let me sail the sea under the banner of the great Kwan Dah."

Her life had been spared and a certain rank had been bestowed upon her because the pirates had believed that they recognized in her that reckless daring which would make her a useful servant of the community. Stripped of all the imposing formalities and oaths of disgraceful brotherhood, her initiation meant no more than that she had taken the place of some veteran criminal who could then be promoted from the labors of actual rapine to the luxurious drone's life of the city.

But she was determined to escape, and she had already formed a plan which could be put in operation as soon as she was fairly embarked with the pirate crew. She shuddered at the thought of the murders she must witness, and even to a certain degree participate in, if her vessel fell in with some unfortunate merchantman before the day of her deliverance came.

On the day following her initiation she was told that the ship was ready to sail. In company with that First Chief whose hand had saved her life, she passed out through the mysterious underground way, and in the flare of the torches she marveled at its wonderful windings and at the black mouths of tunnels which were continually opening in her course only to be closed again.

"This is the way of the forty-nine curves," said the First Chief, who walked by her side. "You observe that at every turn in the path a road opens which invites the feet, but to take any one of them, except that which is known to the faithful, is death."

And Sho Mai shuddered as she passed these mysterious doorways, wondering what horrible form of destruction lurked within their portals. At length they reached the town of the sentries, and passed through it to the road which led them to their ship. A boat was in readiness, and in a few minutes Sho Mai found herself standing on the deck of the swiftly-gliding junk, while over her head floated the black flag of Kwan Dah.

On the evening of this day Sho Mai saw the Chief standing apart from the others near the stern of the junk. She approached him with the customary salute.

"Oh, Chief," said she, "is it the object of this voyage to procure treasure for Kwan Dah?"

"Certainly," replied the Chief. "For what other purpose should we sail?"

"I meant to inquire if we had any definite destination," continued the girl, "to the whither we wandered over the sea at random, hoping to fall in with a Han Chow ship."

"We make no port," returned the Chief, "we put ourselves in the ordinary track of merchant vessels, and then, trust to the God of Fortune."

"If it please you," replied the girl, "I have something to suggest whereby we may perhaps secure great treasure for little trouble or danger. Shall I speak?"

"Say on, and if you give good counsel you shall not fall of your reward at the hands of Kwan Dah."

"You must know, then," said Sho Mai, speaking as calmly as her eagerness would permit, "that I sailed not long since from the city of Paoing in a ship which bore great treasure, stolen from a temple near the city. This vessel was cast upon the great sea of Pon Loy, which you doubtless know."

"I have seen them from the sea," replied the Chief, "and have heard of the great cave in which it is said that demons dwell."

"It was the door of that very cave that the ship of which I have spoken was born," said the girl, "and the treasure which was hidden in the cave, and of all on board I alone escaped; and, indeed, I should have perished of hunger on the rocks had not a chance shown me a way to the city. But I have hitherto told no one of the cargo which the wrecked vessel carried, and as the place is most inaccessible and would in any case be seldom visited, such is the terror it inspires, that I have no doubt that the gold which was in the vessel lies even now among the wreckage in the cave and could be successfully borne away by a few bold men."

"You have spoken well," said the Chief, "evidently deeply interested. If the vessel was cast into the cave her cargo would not come out again, and would be washed by the waves further into its recesses. How long ago was she wrecked?"

"About a year."

"Then no doubt her hull is now broken up, and the gold she carried is strewn about the cave ready to our hands," and the Chief's eyes sparkled at the thought. But suddenly his face grew stern. "You know the consequences of deceiving us in this matter," he said. "You realize that if this story shall prove to be a plot against the safety of the ship that your life will pay the forfeit."

"I know it well," said Sho Mai, steadily. "What I have told you is strictly true. That the treasure is still there I can not say surely, but that such a ship was cast away in that place you shall have evidence to prove."

"That is but reasonable," said the Chief. "We will shape our course for the mountains of Pon Loy."

That night a great storm arose and

drove them before it, but as the sea was open before them the vessel rode safely, and the direction of the wind was such that it hurried her in the course marked out for her. At noon on the following day the clouds broke away, and such had been the progress they had made under the impulse of the tempest, that the cliffs of Pon Loy were already in sight. The junk was run up as near as might be to the mouth of the cave into which enormous waves, stirred up by the storm, were rushing with violence. There, tossed up high at one side of the entrance of the cave, could be seen the broken mast. And this evidence that Sho Mai's story was true removed any suspicion that might have been aroused in his mind. He was now like an animal in sight of its prey. His fingers seemed already to grasp the treasure of the wrecked ship.

The wind was now gentle, though the waves were yet violent, and the junk was able to stand off and on before the



SHE PUSHED HIM FROM THE BRINK.

cave while the chief observed the contour of the rocks, seeking a suitable place to land. At length his eyes found out an inlet, which, piercing the rocks diagonally, was comparatively still. A good crew might bring a boat ashore thus safely, and in his eagerness the Chief resolved to try. He ordered a boat to be manned.

While it was being lowered Sho Mai watched the sailors with her heart in her throat. Would the chief make his investigations alone or would he take her with him? Her chance of escape, and indeed, her safety from immediate death might hang upon this issue. She had told him that she would go as a guide, but he had not replied, and the agony of suspense which she now suffered was like to rend her slender frame in pieces. After what seemed an interval of hours the boat was ready, and the Chief, turning to her, waved his hand in token that she was to accompany him. In the sudden rush of joy her woman's nature had nearly conquered her, and for an instant she felt that she would faint and fall upon the deck; but the danger passed, and lifting up her head in triumph, she stepped to the rail and descended into the waiting boat. The sailors pulled lustily, and the boat, passing safely over the great swells, came into the little inlet, and the party disembarked upon the rocks.

To say what Sho Mai felt as she stood once more upon this spot, made memorable by her first escape from the ocean's peril and hallowed by the words of love which she had heard here, might be to read the whole lesson of the human heart. Here the good angel of her destiny had made his power manifest in the past; here the God of Love had shown his face; and here at this moment the voice of one not far from her seemed to echo from the rocks, and the sound was like the whisper: "Conceal!"

Three men were left to guard the boat, and the others, with the Chief, followed Sho Mai toward the mouth of the cave. She led them not by the most direct path, but chose a way which led by the pool and the gorge, but did not permit of descent to them. Following this they were soon deep in the cave's shadows, and to them, as to her, when she had first been cast into this place, came the horrible voices of the giants mingled with the roar of the waves. The sailors, though their hearts were stout enough upon the sea, were terrified at these sounds, and it required all the Chief's authority to urge them forward. The wind drawing in gusts through the passages of the great cave, beat down the flames of the torches as they gave little light. At length Sho Mai led them to the terrace below the cave's mouth, and there, in the presence of the helpless captives he had numbered; she remembered his blood-thirstiness and his crimes; she recalled his wicked boasting and contrasted it with the cowardice which was now made manifest. And she loathed and hated him, and his crew, with a passion which no other human being had ever awakened in her breast. His wretched life alone now stood between her and freedom.

"Dost thou believe in the demons of the cave?" she said, recalling the cruel question which he had asked of those who were slain by his command on board the pirate junk. "Dost thou believe in the demons of this cave?" she repeated, bending toward him.

"Yes, yes," he faltered, while his knees knocked together.

"Then go to them!" she shrieked, and pushed him from the brink.

Missed Both of Them.

Mother—John, you went to church as usual to-day?

Son—Yes, mother.

Mother—What was the text?

Son—Well, er—you see I didn't get there in time to hear the text.

Mother—What was the gist of the sermon?

Son—I can't tell. You see, mother, I came out just before he got to the gist.

## SINGLE TAX DEPARTMENT.

### A LIBERAL TEXAN.

Attorney-General Hogg on Railroads and the Abuse of Land Monopoly.

Attorney-General Hogg, a Texas, who is running as Democratic candidate for Governor, outlined his views on various public questions in a recent address. He declared himself in favor of State regulation of railways, and showed the analogy of railways to toll roads, where a private corporation maintains the roadbed and charges a sum fixed by law to all persons traveling over the same.

Beginning with common earth roads, graded and leveled, public highways changed not in principle, but in condition and methods of use and enjoyment. Passing through many transmissions, from the plain dirt road to the gravel way, from the latter to the horse-car line, and from that to the steam railway, the public highway developed, as it is now, into the greatest civilization known to civilization, indispensable to commerce and to the welfare of the public, has never escaped the control of the power that gave it life. So long as they were simply earth or turn-pike roads but little or no question was raised as to the right of the Government to control or regulate them, but since they have become laid with post-rail sleepers and steel wheels, and since they are equipped with fine coaches propelled by steam engines and controlled by magnets, pools and combines they are defiant of law and revolt at control in all respects. They are now called "private enterprises."

It was striking what Attorney-General Hogg said on the land question. He spoke thus:

Our constitution further provides that "Perpetuities and monopolies are contrary to the genius of a free government and shall never be allowed." This provision was almost as corporate power in all respects, but especially at their own expense. Many of them have even now have exclusive possession and enjoyment of over a million acres of land in one body. Go into the far West through some of the richest counties of our State and you will find great pastures and corporate estates wired in and controlled exclusively from settlement; their management committed to agents, their titles in aliens, English lords, syndicates and corporations. The like has never been known to any country that guarded well its institutions with respect to the rights, liberties and privileges of the free people that compose it.

These large estates, controlled now for pastoral purposes, will soon be in demand for settlement. As time goes on, within a few years, as the demand for homes becomes stronger, these princely estates will be cut up into small farms and rented or leased and operated by foreign peasantry, uncongenial to our people and under the absolute control of the foreigner. Many of them respect the principles of our government. In time they will become voters, and cast their ballots as free men according to the will of their landlords and rulers. In this way the time is not far distant in Texas, if this condition of affairs should be permitted to continue, when the people will be met in their councils by representatives of English aristocracy elected by their serfs and peons.

While we have the power in the legitimate exercise of our rights as citizens, it is well not to overlook matters of such serious importance and threatening our posterity. This is a country, not of landed monopolies and estates in perpetuity created and run for serfs and slaves, but is one of freemen that should be controlled in all things by and for them. As the title of land is concentrated into the ownership of the few, in that way the power is concentrated. The greater the number of homes, the larger the number of patriots. Deprive our people of lands and they become tenants subject to the will of those who own their homes. In time they grow poor, diseased, degenerate and servile.

Our people are not to be deceived by the promises of our Government, but be only known by the blotched leaves of history; and the thoughtless, indifferent people of to-day will be condemned by the mourning millions who bear their names. Cautiously observing vested rights and principles of justice, if I am elected Governor I shall endeavor to insist upon the passage of laws that will prohibit the further operation of land corporations and to limit the tenure of title in those now owning lands within this State. Within a limited period of years they can sell their lands, receive their money for them and go elsewhere to make their money.

Such laws will not interfere with the subdivision and sale of lands by the corporations now in existence; nor with the ownership of such real estate as is necessary for the purpose of other private corporations whose objects are not the ownership of land.

**PERMANENT VALUE.**  
How James McPherson Fuzzled the Schoolmaster.

James McPherson was a boy of some intelligence, with a father an ardent protectionist, and an uncle an uncompromising free trader of the Manchester school. Naturally, as Jim's father and uncle lived in the same house Jim got a pretty fair idea of the stock arguments on each side, but what he heard could not make out was how labor benefited by either policy. His father sternly maintained that in a protectionist country there were better wages, while his uncle just as strongly maintained the same in regard to free trade countries. Now, Jim, thinking to himself, there can't be such a wide difference between them in any case, or there could not be any necessity for such an endless amount of argument about the subject. At any rate, he thought he would ask the schoolmaster; and one day a favorable opportunity occurred when that gentleman was instructing a class regarding the value of population.

"Every additional head of population," said the schoolmaster, "represents a clear gain to the State or to the community as a whole, of many pounds, and adds to its total wealth."

"Who gets the wealth, sir?" asked Jim.

The schoolmaster looked with surprise at a boy who took an interest in economic questions which, as a general rule, did not interest his pupils. "The wealth," said the schoolmaster, "is taken by those who earn it, and who by their industry and frugality deserve it."

"Have you much wealth?" said Jim, looking into the face of his master, who the whole neighborhood knew was a model of industry and frugality.

A troubled look passed over the face of the schoolmaster, and he replied: "My occupation is not directly productive, but as every man can not educate his own children, a schoolmaster by doing so leaves others more time to produce, and thus keeps the carpenters, tailors and factory hands in production and adds to the national wealth."

"Jim didn't see that this was an answer to his question, so he tried again. 'Do all carpenters, tailors and factory hands who are sober and frugal share in this wealth that you say population gives to the State?'"

"Yes," said the schoolmaster; "in a degree, of course they do, but the share is much smaller than that which goes for interest and rent."

"Why?" said Jim.

"Why?" said the schoolmaster, "why? Because population means more laborers, and more laborers means more competition, and more competition means less wages."

"Then population does not give value to labor?" said Jim.

"No," said the schoolmaster; "on the contrary, competition reduces the value of labor."

"Yet it gives increased wealth to the community, as you prove the value population gives?" said Jim.

"Those," said the schoolmaster, "who possess certain advantages which labor must use to live, and for the use of which labor makes a large return."

"Are there many people possessing such advantages?" asked Jim.

"No," replied the schoolmaster; "they are one or two persons, but compared to population as a whole they are few, very few."

"Are those few persons industrious, temperate and frugal? Do they take the wealth because they earn it, and by their industry and frugality deserve it?" said Jim.

"By no means follows," said the schoolmaster; "those few persons possessing certain advantages gain wealth by the possession of those advantages, and may be neither industrious, frugal nor temperate."

"All they get the largest share?" said Jim.

"Yes," said the schoolmaster.

"It does not seem fair," said Jim.

"It is a state of things," said the schoolmaster, "that is not our place to grumble at; these advantages are natural opportunities, principally land, which few people have obtained and which entitles them to the value given by population."

"Then if population does not give value to labor it only gives value to land," said Jim, "because labor can not do without it, and the man who owns the land gets the greatest share of the value."

"If you could only prove that my boy," said the schoolmaster, "you would make out a case for the followers of Henry George, whose works, by the way, I have not read. Unfortunately for his theories, population gives value to many things beside land."

"Permanent value?" said Jim.

"That is not permanent value," said Jim.

"What things?" said Jim.

"Well," said the schoolmaster, "let me see. Here are the boys' hats, for example. If a store-keeper had a lot of hats, and population suddenly increased, hats would become valuable."

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